

Message Text

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ACTION INT-05

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7086

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PLEASE PASS US FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAG: SENV, BL

SUBJECT: USA PROPOSAL TO TREAT EIGHT SPECIES OF CROCODYLIA AS
ENDANGERED

REF: STATE A-2925

FOLLOWING ARE GOB COMMENTS ON SUBJECT PROPOSAL. REGRET DELAY IN
TRANSMITTING. BEGIN QUOTE BOLIVIA'S INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IS JUST
BEGINNING AND ITS ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION TO THE COUNTRY'S
BALANCE OF PAYMENTS IS IMPORTANT.

BOLIVIA HAS THREE SPECIALIZED COMPANIES ENGAGED IN TANNING AND
TREATMENT OF SAURIEAN SKINS. THESE COMPANIES ARE WORKING UNDER THE
NAME OF ASICUSA (ASOCIACION DE INDUSTRIAS CURTIORES DE SAURIOS) WITH
HEADQUARTERS IN COCHABAMBA. THIS ASSOCIATION OBTAINS RIGHTS FOR
HUNTING AND UTILIZATION OF SAURIAN SKINS, HAVING PREVIOUSLY PAID
STATE TAXES, UNDER STRICT CONTROL OF QUOTAS WHICH GUARANTEE THE
RATIONAL USE OF THIS SPECIES WITHOUT JEOPARDIZING ITS BIOLOGICAL
POTENTIAL. BECAUSE OF THE SPECIAL TREATMENT THESE SKINS REQUIRE,
THE COMPANIES HAVE PURCHASED SPECIAL MACHINERY AND ARE, BY MEANS
OF ADEQUATE TRAINING IN BOLIVIA AND OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY, PRE-
PARING THEIR TECHNICAL PERSONNEL WHICH, IN MOST CASES, BECOME
PARTNERS OF THE COMPANIES AND ARE NOT JUST LABORERS.

LIMITATION OR ELIMINATION OF ALLIGATORS' (AND CROCODILES) SKIN

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TANNING WOULD CREATE A LABOR PROBLEM WITH NEGATIVE CON-
SEQUENCES FOR THE BOLIVIAN GOVERNMENT.

BOLIVIA IS AWARE OF THIS PROBLEM AND SAFEGUARDS THE CONSERVATION
IBH NATURE AND ITS FLORA AND FAUNA. THIS HAS BEEN DEMONSTRATED
BY ITS PERMANENT PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES
AND ITS CONCURRENCE WITH INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS, SUCH AS THE
1973 WASHINGTON CONVENTIONSIGNED BY (BOLIVIA), AND ITS

PARTICIPATION IN IUCN AND WWF, AS WELL AS IN THE UNITED NATIONS, FAO, UNESCO, MAB, CNRS (FRANCE), ETC. WE ARE AWARE OF THE RISK OF EXTINCTION OF THE SAURIAN. IN THIS REGARD, MEASURES ARE BEING ADOPTED TO ESTABLISH BREEDING AND REPOPULATION CENTERS, LIMIT BY QUOTAS, ANNUAL HUNTING AND FORBIDDING HUNTING DURING THE PERIOD OF MATING AND NESTLING.

THE STATE HAS ORGANIZED THE NATIONAL BREEDING AND REPOPULATION CENTER FOR SAURIAN IN THE ISIBORO-SECURE NATIONAL PARK. ABOUT 90 PER CENT OF THE BUDGET FOR THIS PROJECT IS SUPPORTED BY ASICUSA. IN THE EVENT THERE IS A REDUCTION IN MARKET, THE GOV WOULD HAVE TO ACCEPT A SMALLER CONTRIBUTION FOR THE REPOPULATION PROGRAMS.

ARTICLE 25 OF THE GENERAL LAW OF WILDLIFE, NO. 12301, DATED MARCH 14, 1975, ESTABLISHED THAT COMPANIES BENEFITING FROM AND TANNING WILD ANIMAL SKINS SHOULD MAINTAIN BREEDING CENTERS. THIS IS PRESENTLY BEING DONE.

IN VIEW OF THE ABOVE CONSIDERATIONS, THE BOLIVIAN GOVERNMENT PRESENTLY ISSUES HUNTING PERMITS AND AUTHORIZES EXPORTATION OF ALLIGATORS TANNED SKINS. THE ELIMINATION OF THE AMERICAN MARKET IN THE TANNED CROCODILE SKINS INDUSTRY WOULD BE A SERIOUS DETRIMENT TO BOLIVIA'S ECONOMY.

WE RECOMMEND THAT A PERIOD OF TIME WHEN HUNTING OF SMALL SAURIANS WOULD BE FORBIDDEN BE ESTABLISHED INTERNATIONALLY. THIS WOULD APPLY ESPECIALLY TO THOSE ANIMALS SMALLER THAN THE REQUIRED SIZE, SINCE THE UTILIZATION OF YOUNG ANIMALS' UNCLASSIFIED

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SKINS INCREASES THE POSSIBILITY OF SMUGGLING, AND DRAMATICALLY LIMITS THE BIOLOGICAL/ECOLOGICAL RECUPERATION AND EQUILIBRIUM OF THIS SPECIES. END QUOTE SCAFE

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